

9. ADJUTANT'S ROOM (Originally part of the South Squad Drill Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11; cabinetry, 1880

Style: Renaissance Revival

The Adjutant's Room on the first floor was created from the western section of the South Squad Drill Room (fitted in pine) during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11; the Adjutant was formerly located in a room on the second floor (which became the Company M Room) that was originally decorated by Pottier & Stymus in 1880 in the Queen Anne style. Plans by Robinson & Knust indicate the installation of the east wall and doors (to Adjutant's and Colonel's offices), oak parquet floor, and two "old locker[s] reset." It is not currently known if the triple-section cabinet and smaller cabinet in this room were original to the second floor Adjutant's Room (and thus a Pottier & Stymus feature), or were moved here from elsewhere in the armory at that time; the new door surrounds and wainscot were designed to match these.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

- 1 door surround with double sliding doors (1880)
- 1 triple-section cabinet and 1 smaller cabinet (1880)
- ash paneled wainscot
- 2 door surrounds (doors leading to small offices) with transoms
- plaster ceiling with molded cornice
- oak parquet floor
- wood and perforated metal radiator cabinet on south wall
- 6 hanging light fixtures (1942)

References

Clark; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Armory Committee Report* (1942)



Adjutant's Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

10. EQUIPMENT ROOM (Originally Quartermaster's Room)

Architects: Clinton & Russell, 1895; Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Style: neo-Classical

The Equipment Room was originally the Quartermaster's Room, fitted in pine in 1880. The Trustees authorized the re-fitting of the room in 1895, with new cabinetwork and hardwood floor designed by architects Clinton & Russell and executed by Dey & Somerville; Herter Brothers was paid for wall and ceiling decoration, including "plaster beams and 18 large plaster rosettes," completed around July 1896. Plans for the "Horse Equipment" Room by Robinson & Knust, during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11, indicate the installation of a new ceiling and lockers "as are" in the room.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

- 1 door surround with double sliding doors and transom (1880)
- oak paneled wainscot (probably 1895)
- 1 window and 1 doorway/window (with double-hung sash) to Drill Room (1909-11; latter has lower sash pushed up and new door inserted)
- 2 "hammered bronze effect wrought-iron chain chandeliers" (1909-11) [now above dropped ceiling, 1994]
- [partitions walls inserted into room, 1994]

References

Clark; *SRG* (1895-96); *Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1895-96); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Minutes, Board of Officers* (Nov. 1895)

11. OUTER COMMITTEE ROOM (Originally part of North Squad Drill Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Style: neo-Classical

The Outer Committee Room was created from the western section of the North Squad Drill Room (fitted in pine) during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11. Plans by Robinson & Knust indicate the installation of new wainscot, oak parquet floor, and a plaster cornice in the "Line Officers" Room, while the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1909) stated that the room was to be "finished in mahogany with wall decorations in golds." It has a heavy brass ring chandelier and four wall bracket fixtures from this period.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot

2 door surrounds with double doors (those on the hallway are sliding)

1 small door to stairs on north wall

1 lacquered brass octagonal ring and chain chandelier

4 lacquered brass wall bracket light fixtures

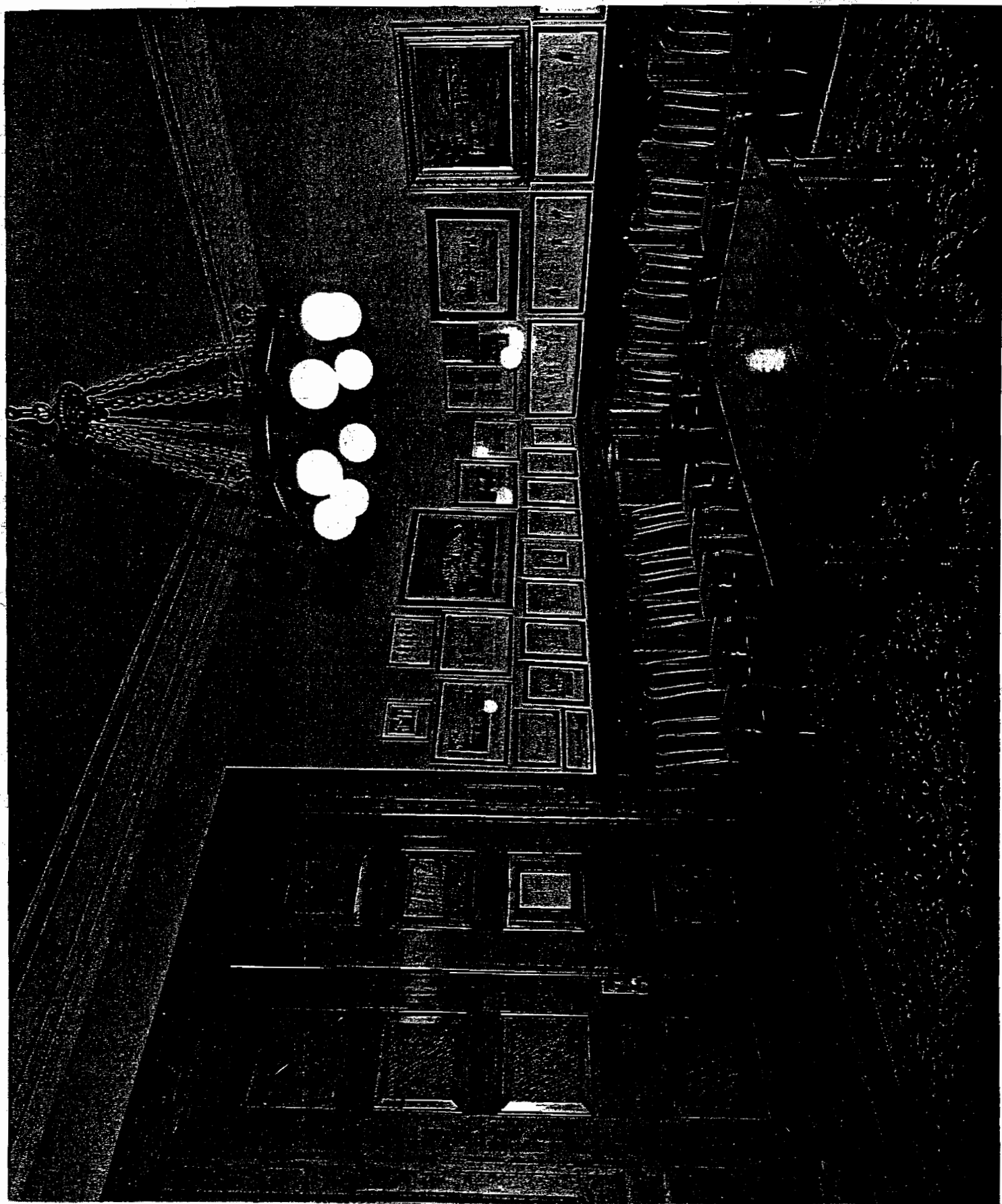
plaster ceiling with molded cornice

oak parquet floor

[a partition currently divides the room]

References

Clark; *SRG* (Dec. 1909); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.



Outer Committee Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

12. INNER COMMITTEE ROOM (Originally part of North Squad Drill Room)

Architects: Robinson & Knust, 1909-11

Style: neo-Classical

The Inner Committee Room was created from the eastern section of the North Squad Drill Room (fitted in pine) during the additions and alterations to the armory in 1909-11. Plans by Robinson & Knust indicate the installation of new wainscot, oak parquet floor, and a plaster cornice for the "Field Officers/Staff Officers" Room, while the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1909) stated that the room was to be "finished in mahogany with wall decorations in golds." It has a heavy brass ring chandelier and six wall bracket fixtures from this period.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot

1 door surround with double doors

2 window surrounds (which flank raised central portion of east wall)

1 lacquered brass ring chandelier

6 lacquered brass wall bracket light fixtures

plaster ceiling with molded cornice

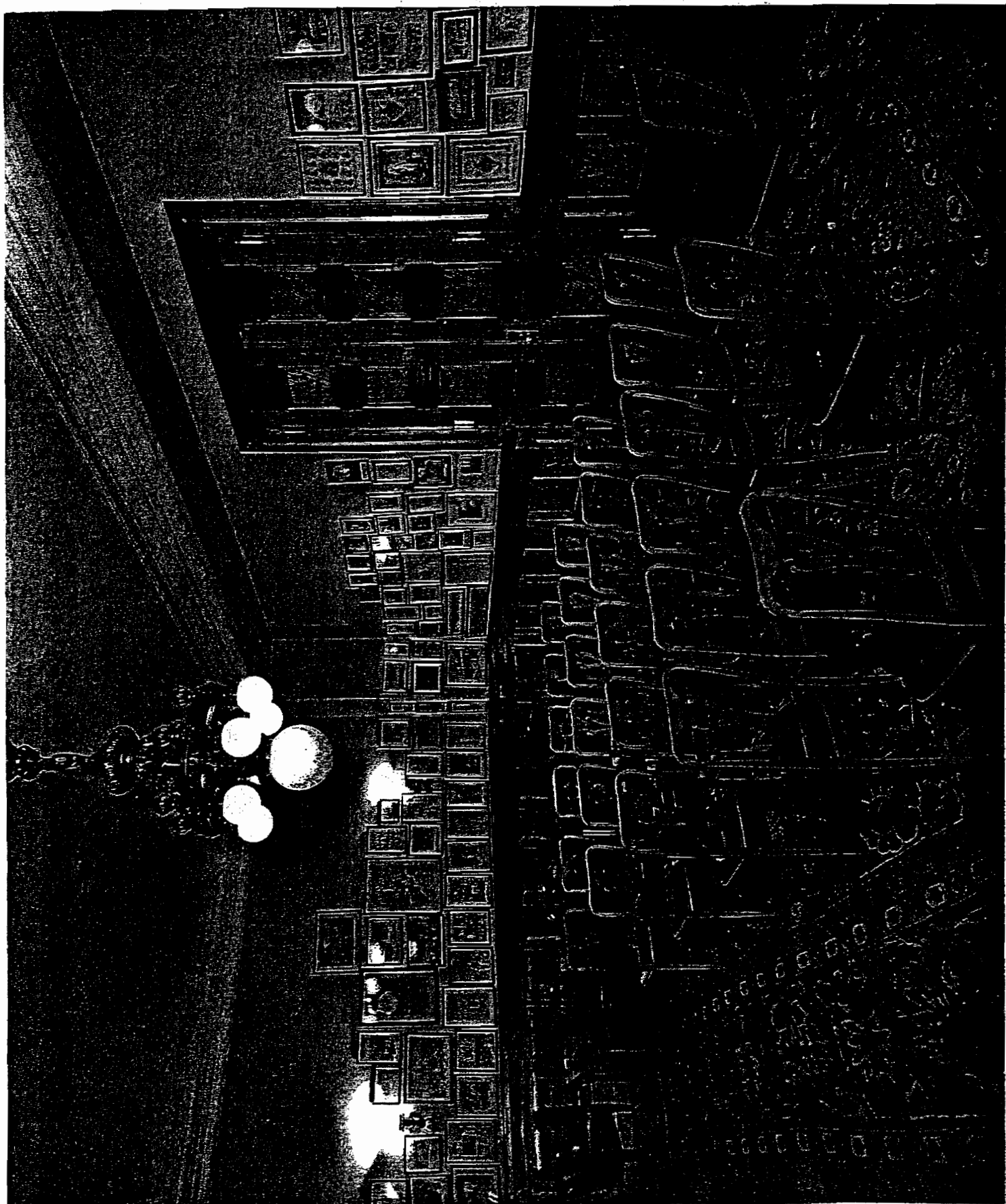
oak parquet floor

1 cast-iron radiator with marble top (Baker, Smith & Co., 1909)

[a partition currently divides the room]

References

Clark; *SRG* (Dec. 1909); Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.



Inner Committee Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

13. FIELD AND STAFF ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: Pottier & Stymus Mfg. Co., 1880

Alterations: James B. Christopher, carpenter, 1895, 1898
[Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport], 1933

Style: Renaissance Revival

The Field and Staff Room was the only regimental room on the first floor of the armory decorated in 1880 by Pottier & Stymus, the firm most popular among the companies for the decoration of their rooms. The records of disbursements of the New Armory Fund indicate that Pottier & Stymus was paid for "cabinet work" for the room in June 1880 (as part of a \$6941 contract for three rooms), and for furniture, curtains, "panel work," and a mirror in October, when the room was completed. Col. Emmons Clark commented that "large ornamental lockers for the accommodation of the officers are a pronounced feature of the room, and it is handsomely and elaborately decorated." The room was extensively stenciled on the ceiling, the broad frieze, and the walls; the *Boston Press* noted that the "richest of bands wrought into passion flowers and scrolls runs round the wall." The amount of dark mahogany cabinetwork and wainscot originally was sparser; in 1895 and 1898 the Board of Trustees authorized James B. Christopher, carpenter, to build additional lockers (in 1909-11 one section on the north wall was removed) and extend the wainscot. Most of the regimental rooms received new lighting fixtures during the electrification of the armory in 1897 (which replaced the original gas fixtures by Mitchell, Vance & Co.); the *Seventh Regiment Gazette* (Dec. 1897) described the new fixtures in this room as "black wrought iron; design is massive, and withal unique." [Minutes of the Trustees indicate that the fixtures were refinished in 1907, and a 1917 inventory lists one "41 light" chandelier; apparently the existing wall bracket fixtures date from 1897 and the two chandeliers are later.] The inventory also mentioned that the walls at that time were decorated with "Lincrusta Walton." The Armory Committee reported in 1933 that the room had been "completely redecorated and partly refurnished," apparently by the firm of Irving & Casson/A.H. Davenport, which was doing work in the room at the time. Additional changes include the two chandeliers and two plaster diamonds on the ceiling, and the elimination of the east wall window [part of the surround may exist under a large painting]. In recent years a bar counter has been installed at the east end of the room.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

paneled wainscot (upper portion 1898)

lockers (including additions, 1895-98) [north section removed 1909-11]

1 door surround with double sliding doors (and transom)

2 window surrounds [Drill Room window surround, currently obscured by a large painting, may survive in part]

south wall central console (with mirror) flanked by quarter-round end cabinets

north wall mantel (with a fireplace having a metal fireback and decorative art tile surround and hearth) and overmantel (with mirror)

plaster ceiling with molded cove and frieze (and 2 diamonds around chandeliers, c. 1933)

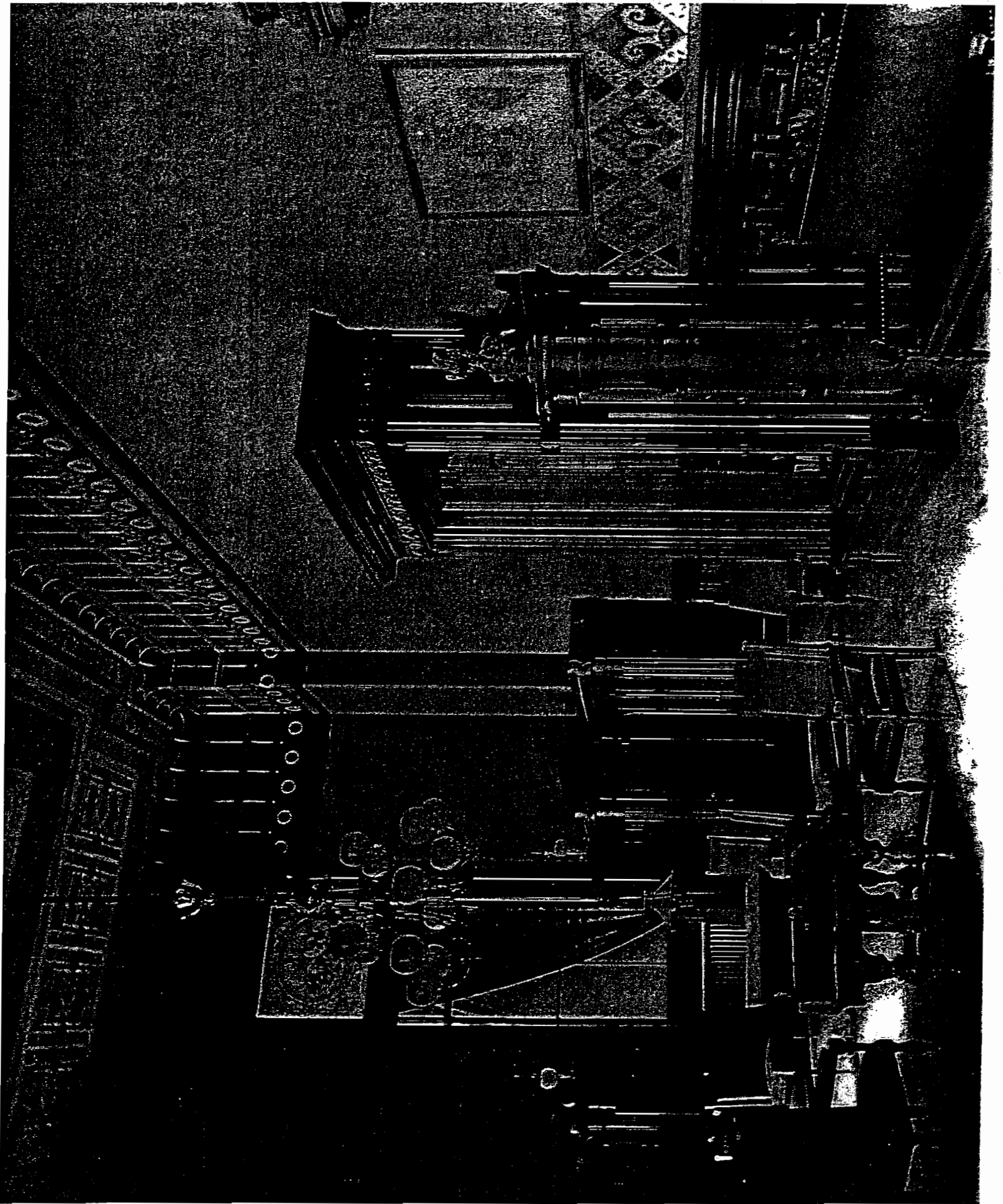
4 wall bracket light fixtures (1897)

2 chandeliers [c. 1933]

parquet floor (vinyl tile recently placed around bar counter)

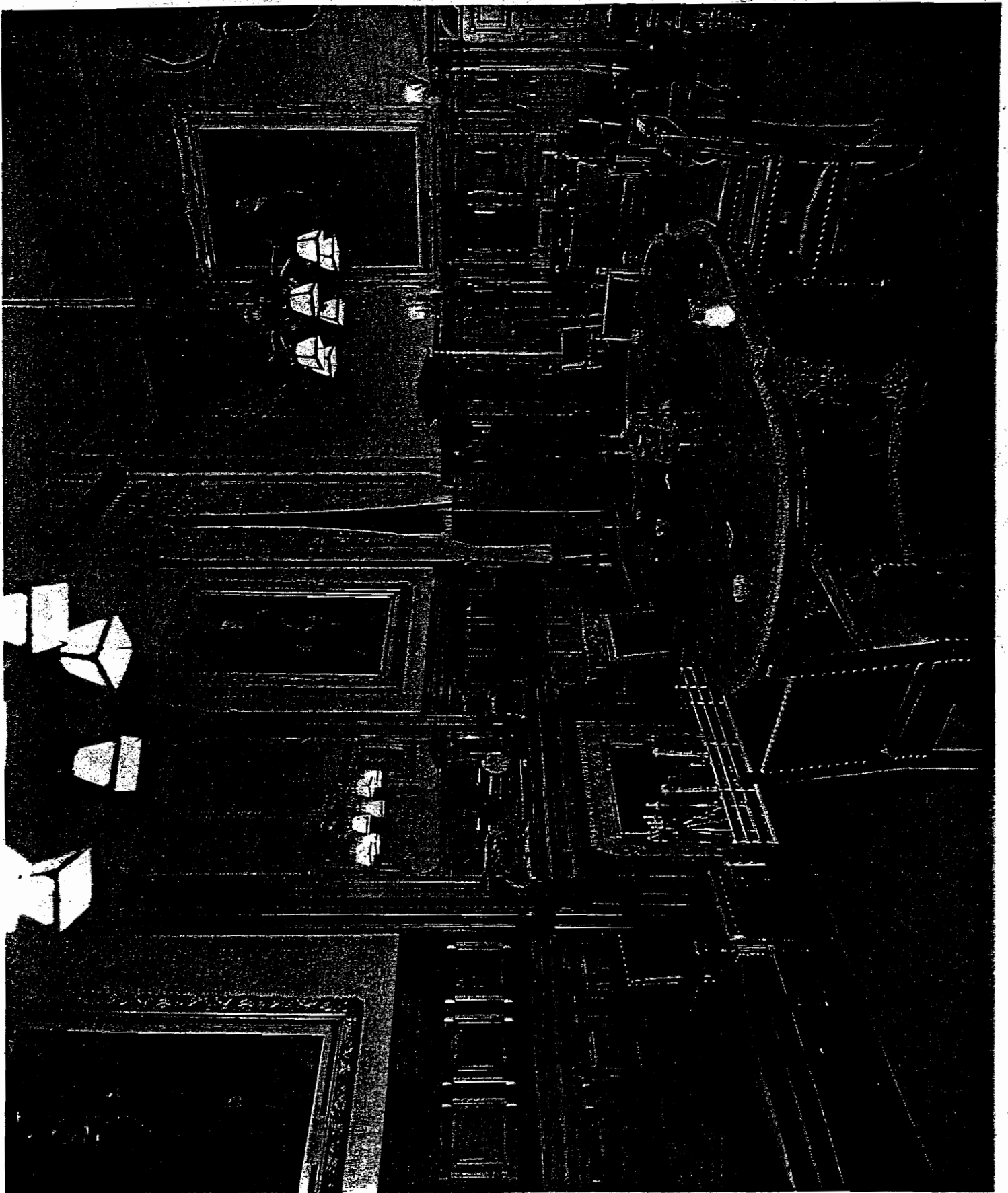
References

Clark; *NYT* (Apr. 10, 1880); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book; Minutes, Trustees of the Seventh Regiment Armory Building* (1895-1909); *SRG* (Dec., 1897); *Treasurer's Report* (1932, 1934, 1951); Pach Bros. photograph; Albert Waks photograph; Additions and Alterations Plans (June 4, 1909); International Appraising Co.; *Letterbook, Board of Officers* (Oct. 1880); *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *Armory Committee Report* (1933); *Trow's NYC Directory* (1895)



Field and Staff Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society



Field and Staff Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

14. DRILL ROOM

Built: 1878-79

Architects: Charles W. Clinton; Robert G. Hatfield, consulting architect

Consulting Engineer: Charles Macdonald, Delaware Bridge Co.

Ironwork: Passaic Rolling Mill Co., Paterson, N.J.
Alfred R. Whitney, contractor

Alterations: Floyd L. Robinson (Robinson & Knust), architect, 1911-13;
Charles Meads & Co., contractor

The vast Drill Room, approximately 200 by 300 feet and 100 feet high, was one of the largest unobstructed interiors in New York City upon the completion of construction in 1879. While Charles W. Clinton was the overall architect of the armory, he employed two specialists for this important project: Robert G. Hatfield, consulting architect, an expert in the use of structural iron who was involved in the design of the iron trusses of the shed of the first Grand Central Depot (1869-71, John B. Snook and Isaac C. Buckhout), and Charles Macdonald, consulting engineer, a roof and bridge engineer and president of the Delaware Bridge Company, a subsidiary of the important iron-and-steel producing Cooper, Hewitt & Company. Col. Emmons Clark credited Macdonald with "the designs and plans for the large iron trusses and other iron-work" and Hatfield with "the study of the working plans as drawn with reference to the strength of materials and of the construction of the building in its various parts." Passaic Rolling Mill Company supplied 1,150,000 pounds of iron for the armory in 1878, and Alfred R. Whitney was contractor for the Drill Room ironwork (and apparently an agent for Passaic). The Drill Room is significant in the history of American engineering because it is considered to have the oldest extant "balloon shed" (a barrel vaulted roof supported on visible arch trusses or ribs, the trusses also acting as lateral braces) and is also thought to have been one of the first buildings in the United States not associated with a railroad to incorporate this structural system. The balloon shed was often used in railroad stations (though very few sheds are still extant in the United States), particularly after its first major American usage in the Grand Central Depot. The shed of the armory was structurally more advanced than Grand Central's – while the latter's trusses had a uniform distance between top and bottom chords, the armory's elliptical trusses have an intrados and extrados springing from a different center so that the haunches widen for additional strength. Demonstrating the difficult nature of this engineering project is a letter from Col. Clark to Alfred Whitney in September 1878:

The party you have employed to erect iron work for roof of 7 Reg New Armory has been engaged for more than two weeks in a serio-comic attempt to raise one of the trusses. ...the partially erected truss came tumbling down, injuring your iron work and one building to the amount of several hundred dollars.... I would ask and demand that this iron work shall be erected in a manner and by a method which will be approved by engineers generally and which is in accordance with common sense and that the appliances for such erection shall be safe, suitable and sufficient.

The eleven arch trusses, each spanning over 187 feet (and originally entirely visible almost to the floor level), support an upper roof extension (which is supported on additional trusses), two levels of clerestory windows (originally arched), and the pine plank roof. There were originally almost 1100 seats on all four sides, including two levels of galleries on the west and one on the east (supported by large iron brackets), hanging gas lights (ignited by electricity) with porcelain reflectors, walnut wainscot, and walnut gun cabinets lining the west wall. One of the most noted aspects of the Drill Room was its painted decoration, supervised by artist Jasper F. Cropsey; every

newspaper account of the building noted the "brilliant colors" (red, white and blue) of the room, including ornamental painting of the trusses and galleries, broad borders on the wall, the national emblem on buttresses, and stars and other emblems on the ceiling (taste changed – by 1897 Col. Daniel Appleton expressed his displeasure with the "'lager beer saloon' effect"). A large coat of arms (by Sgt. Asher Taylor) was painted at the top of the west wall, while a large Tiffany & Co. clock (1880) still exists on the east wall.

The Drill Room, besides serving a critical and functional role as the site of military drills after October 1880, was also of enormous importance in the social and cultural life of the regiment over the years. This has been the site of the New Armory Fair in November-December 1879 (attended by thousands); the New Armory Inauguration Ball of December 1880 (which attracted nearly 7000 people, and prompted the *New York World* to call it the largest and "finest dancing hall in the country"); concerts, after the Music Festival of May 1881 (directed by Walter Damrosch, with 10,000 spectators); annual regimental athletic games, beginning in March 1882; a huge reception in March 1894 to celebrate the complete liquidation of the armory debt; and a Reconstruction Celebration in January 1911. The Knickerbocker Greys, a drill class for boys, and the Seventh Regiment Tennis Club, the oldest continuously operating American indoor tennis club, were both founded in 1881 and have continued to use the room. Between 1900 and 1940, and as recently as 1963, the National Indoor Tennis Championship had been held here. The space was so popular that at various points in the armory's history the regiment made the decision to prohibit non-regimental or non-military usage.

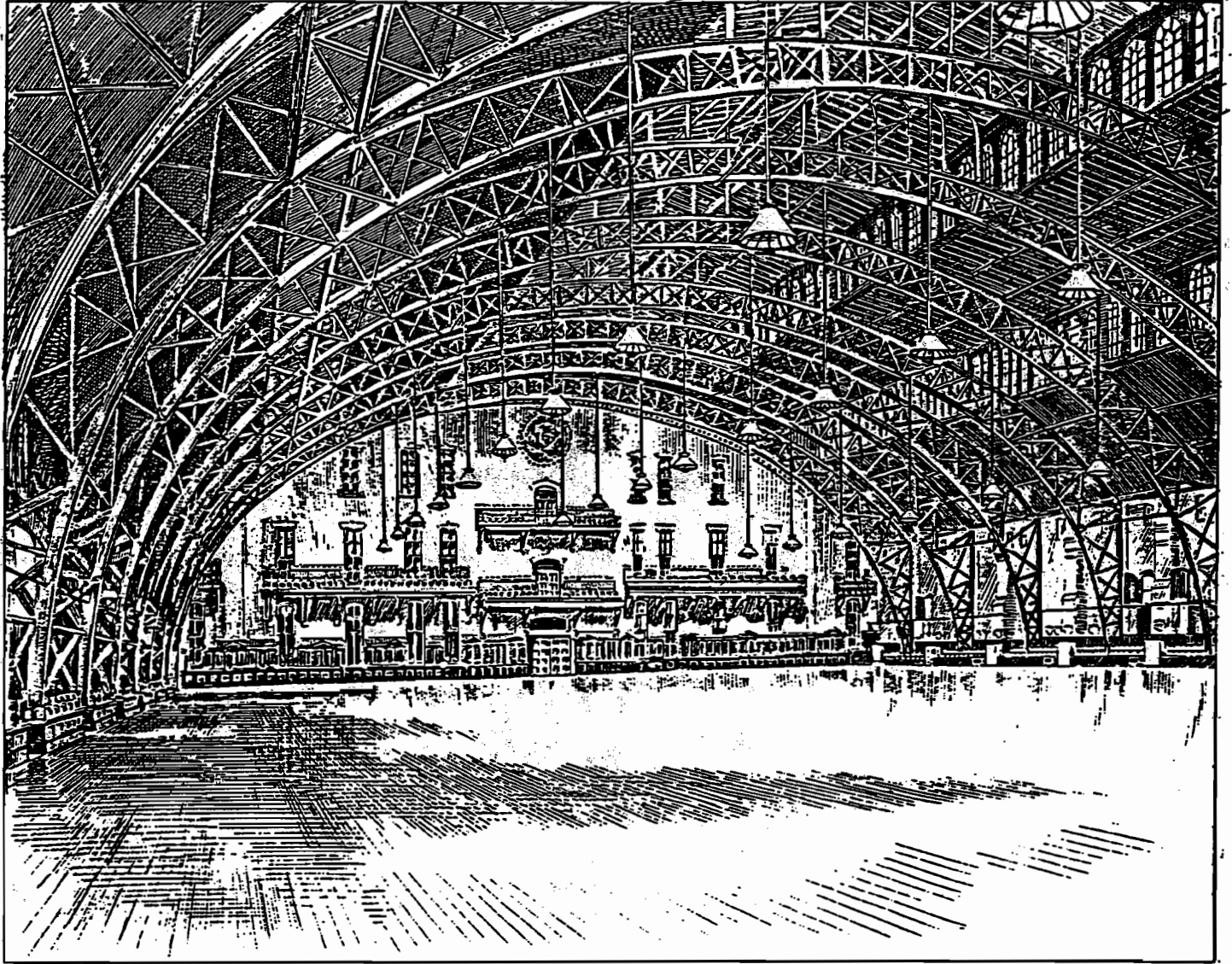
Col. Daniel Appleton initiated actions as early as 1897 to increase the seating capacity of the Drill Room, noting that only Madison Square Garden handled larger New York crowds. After the completion of additions and alterations to the administration building of the armory in 1909-11, the regiment turned its attention to the Drill Room. In order to increase the seating capacity to about 3000, numerous changes were made. Architect Floyd L. Robinson of Robinson & Knust (which was responsible for the work of 1909-11) filed plans in October 1911. The construction contract (for \$218,000, which also included a new high-pressure water system), not let until after June 1912, went to Charles Meads & Co.; the work was completed around September 1913. Among the alterations were: the elimination of the galleries (except for one on the second mezzanine level on the west wall) for the construction of one large continuous gallery, with steelplate fascia and bronze handrails; the insertion of steel columns next to the arch trusses (with both encased in concrete, capped by skewbacks) to support the gallery; four corner steel stairways; the roof and trusses were painted a light gray-green color, and the rest gray; a new system of lights; bricking in the large windows on the north and south walls, and installing new rectangular clerestory windows (with grilles on the upper ones); the north and south wall buttresses were removed, while the east wall buttresses were built up to meet a new "cornice" (with a matching one on the east); and the center window was enlarged on the east wall and (in concert with exterior alterations) doorways were changed. The area under the gallery [not included in this designation, except for the corner stairs and passageways to the entrances] was devoted to additional seating and storage cabinets, with metal wainscot (after 1952 this area was further converted to storage by the installation of cinderblock walls on the north and south and partition walls on the east and west). Although it was intended that the original Georgia pine Drill Room floor was to be taken out, "it was found impossible to obtain lumber of even approximately as good quality as the old floor," so it was relaid, using boards from along the sides as replacements where necessary. In 1955 a rolldown Lexington Avenue door was installed in an enlarged opening (with some adjacent gallery changes). Most of the gallery seating has been removed.

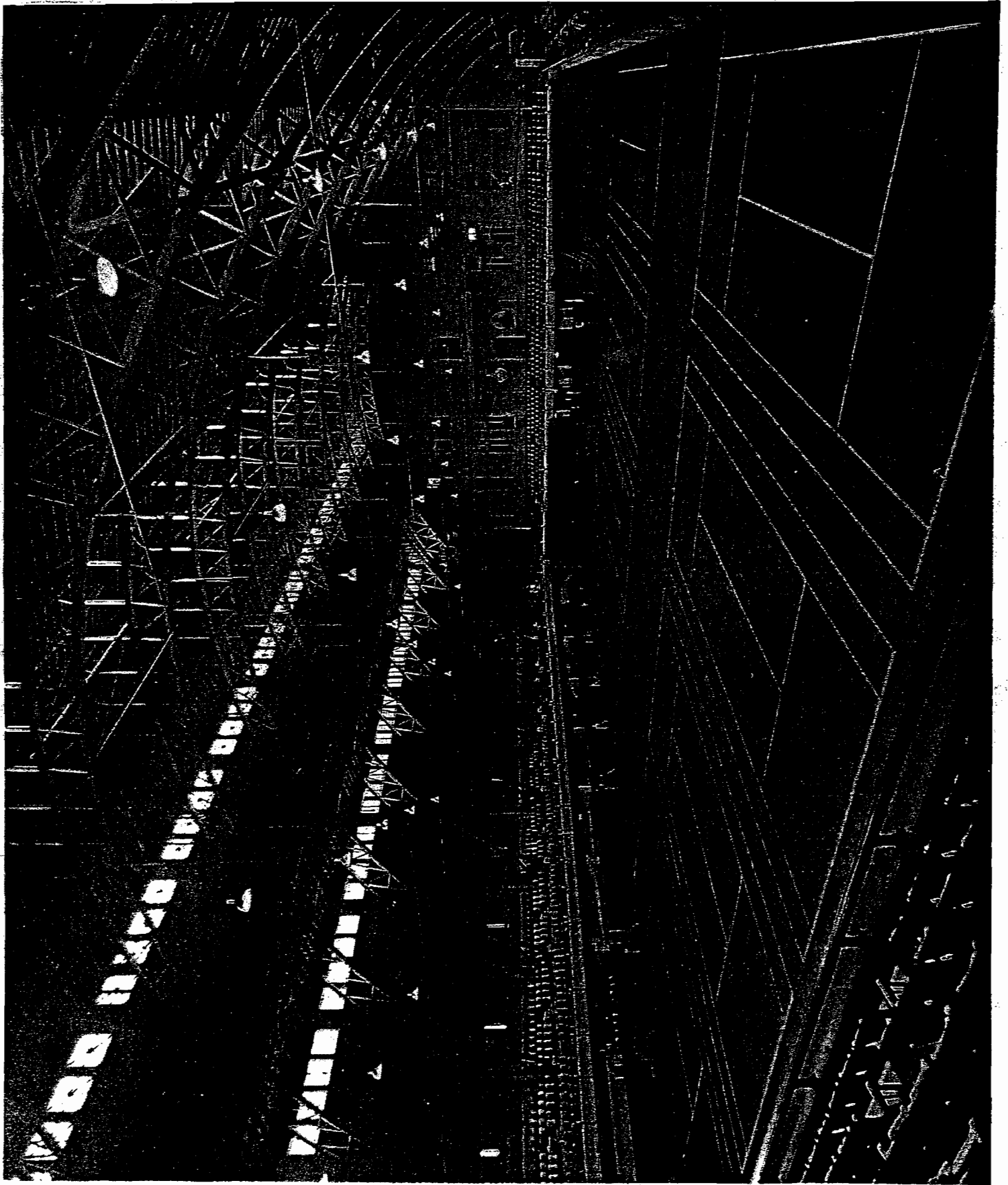
Descriptive List of Significant Features

Georgia yellow pine, thin plank floor (painted) (1878-79)
eleven iron arch trusses, and upper roof extension supported on additional trusses (1878-79)
pine plank ceiling (1878-79)
second-mezzanine-level bracketed gallery with balustrade (1878-79) on west wall
Tiffany & Co. clock (1880) on east wall
doorways with double doors and transoms on the first floor and first and second mezzanine levels of west wall (1878-79)
second- and third-floor windows on west wall (1878-79)
gallery, with steelplate fascia and bronze railing, and four corner steel stairways (1911-13)
clerestory windows (1911-13)
system of hanging lights (1911-13/c. 1921/later)

References

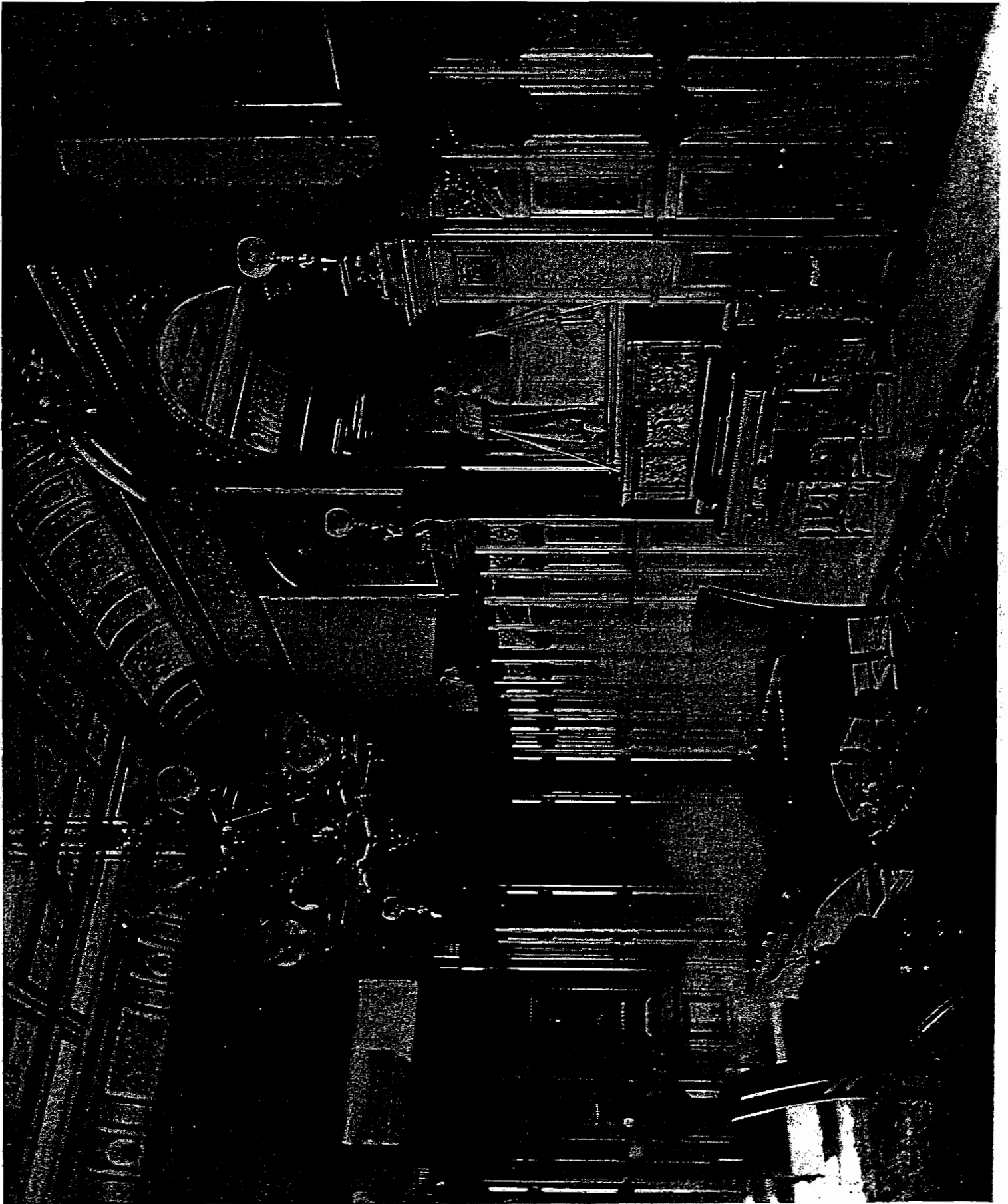
Clark; Clark, *Letterbook* (Sept. 10, 1878); *NYT* (Nov. 14, 1879); *New Armory Fund, Receipts and Disbursements and Cash Book*; *SRG* (1911-13; 1921); *Treasurer's Report* (1951-52; 1955); Pach Bros. photographs; Albert Waks photograph; Shriner; *NY Herald* (Nov. 14, 1879; Sept. 25, 1880); *NY World* (Apr. 5 and Dec. 16, 1880); *NY Evening Telegram* (Apr. 24, 1880); *NY Tribune* (Sept. 25, 1880); *Fourth Company Records* (Sept. 1880); *Scribner's Monthly* (May 1880); Appleton, *Letterbook* (Sept. 1897); Harper and Weldon; Friedman; Condit; *The Armory Board* (1884-1911; 1912-13)





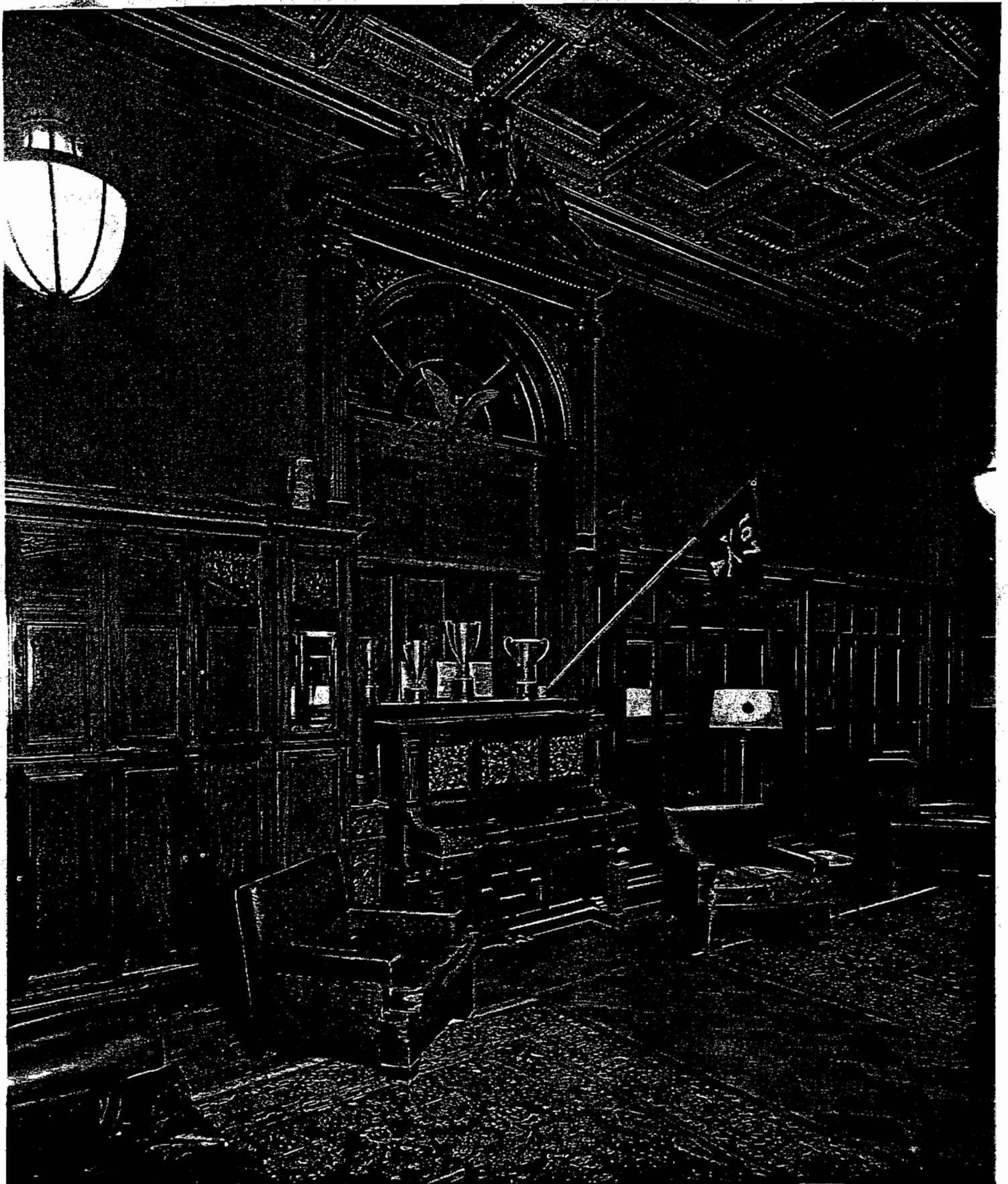
Drill Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)



Company A Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society



Company A Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)

COMPANY A ROOM

Interior Decoration Firm: "a prominent New York firm" [George C. Flint & Co. or Alexander Roux & Co.]?, 1880

Redecoration: 1897; 1907; 1924-25

Style: Renaissance Revival

Company A Room was initially decorated in 1880 at a cost of \$7791, by "a prominent New York firm" according to *The Decorator and Furnisher* in 1885. This is one of only three company rooms at the armory for which the interior decoration firms are unattributed; the *New York Times* in 1880 cited Flint & Co. and Roux & Co. among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor, so either of these is a possibility (as well as Pottier & Stymus or Herter Brothers, who decorated nearly all other company spaces, or Kimbel & Cabus). It is also intriguing to note that architect William H. Hume, a veteran of the company, had designed the Company A Room at the Tompkins Market Armory. The dark mahogany woodwork (which is still in place) contrasted with the elaborate stenciling on the coved, pale blue ceiling and the pale green walls with "the effect of embossed leather" and a gold frieze; a gilt bronze gas chandelier hung from the ceiling. As early as 1892 the company considered redecoration; the first documented changes occurred in 1897 at the time of electrification, probably including a new ceiling which "cost several thousand dollars." Later redecoration took place in 1924, new lighting fixtures were donated in 1925, the WWI memorial received a new setting in 1936, and Warner Brothers donated a new fireplace in 1937.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

San Domingo mahogany woodwork, including:

lockers (terminations/wood pedestals for gas fixtures removed (1897?))

1 door surround with double doors (and leaded stained-glass transom, 1907)

3 window surrounds

north wall surround (originally having a piano alcove and mirror; altered for bronze WWI memorial tablet and paneling, 1936) south wall mantel (original nickelplated fireplace replaced by marble one, 1937) and overmantel (with mirror)

elaborately molded, rectangular-coffered ceiling (probably 1897)

4 chandeliers (1925)

2 wood and perforated metal radiator cabinets

parquet floor

References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; *NYT* (Apr. 10, 1880); *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *SRG* (1892-1937); Albert Waks photograph

COMPANY B ROOM

Architect: Albert Wagner, 1880

Interior Decoration Firm: unknown [George C. Flint & Co. or Alexander Roux & Co.]?, 1880

Redecoration: 1896; Tiffany Studios, 1906

Style: Renaissance Revival

Company B Room was initially designed in 1880 by architect Albert Wagner, according to the *Boston Press* of that year. Wagner (d. 1898) was born in Germany, came to the United States in 1871, initially worked for both Alfred B. Mullett, Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury, and Leopold Eidlitz, and was listed in directories from 1880 to his death; his most notable design was the Puck Building (1885-86; 1892-93, a designated New York City Landmark) at 295-309 Lafayette Street. This is one of only three company rooms at the armory for which the interior decoration firms are unattributed; the *New York Times* in 1880 cited Flint & Co. and Roux & Co. as among the firms that decorated rooms on this floor, so that either of these is a possibility (as well as Pottier & Stymus or Herter Brothers, who decorated nearly all other company spaces, or Kimbel & Cabus). The dark mahogany woodwork dominates the room, which was originally embellished by a stencilled frieze and walls in dark blue and gold, and a prominent central gas chandelier; the *Press* stated that "the ceiling is done in wood with fine bold mouldings and circles of ebony inlaid with white wood." In 1895 the company considered the question of redecoration, which first occurred in 1896 and included papered walls. After Tiffany Studios was hired in 1906 for remodelling, the men thought that "language fails to express the beauty of our remodelled Company Room"; changes at that time included the installation of the three electric chandeliers, probably the application of copper leaf to the ceiling, and possibly the removal of the spindle railing on top of the lockers. The WWI memorial was dedicated in 1924, causing the change in location of the original Civil War memorial. By 1933 the company claimed to have spent "in the amount of over fifty thousand dollars" on decorations for the room.

Descriptive List of Significant Features

mahogany woodwork, including:

lockers (spindle railing removed, probably 1906)

1 door surround with double doors (with mirrors and leaded stained- glass transom, c.1906?)

4 window surrounds (3 with leaded stained-glass screens in the upper portions, c. 1906?)

original paneled ceiling and cornice (with molded frieze; applied copper leaf/acanthus leaves removed, probably 1906)

south wall mantel (with later marble fireplace surround and hearth, and metal fireback) and overmantel (with mirror)

north wall surround (originally an alcove for a cabinet and Civil War memorial tablet-- altered for piano alcove, bronze Stephen Merritt (d. 1891) memorial tablet, and bronze WWI memorial tablet (1924, Arthur Ware))

bronze and marble Civil War memorial tablet (placed on west wall between windows, 1924)

2 cast-iron radiators (James Curran Mfg. Co., 1902)

3 chandeliers (1906, Tiffany & Co.)

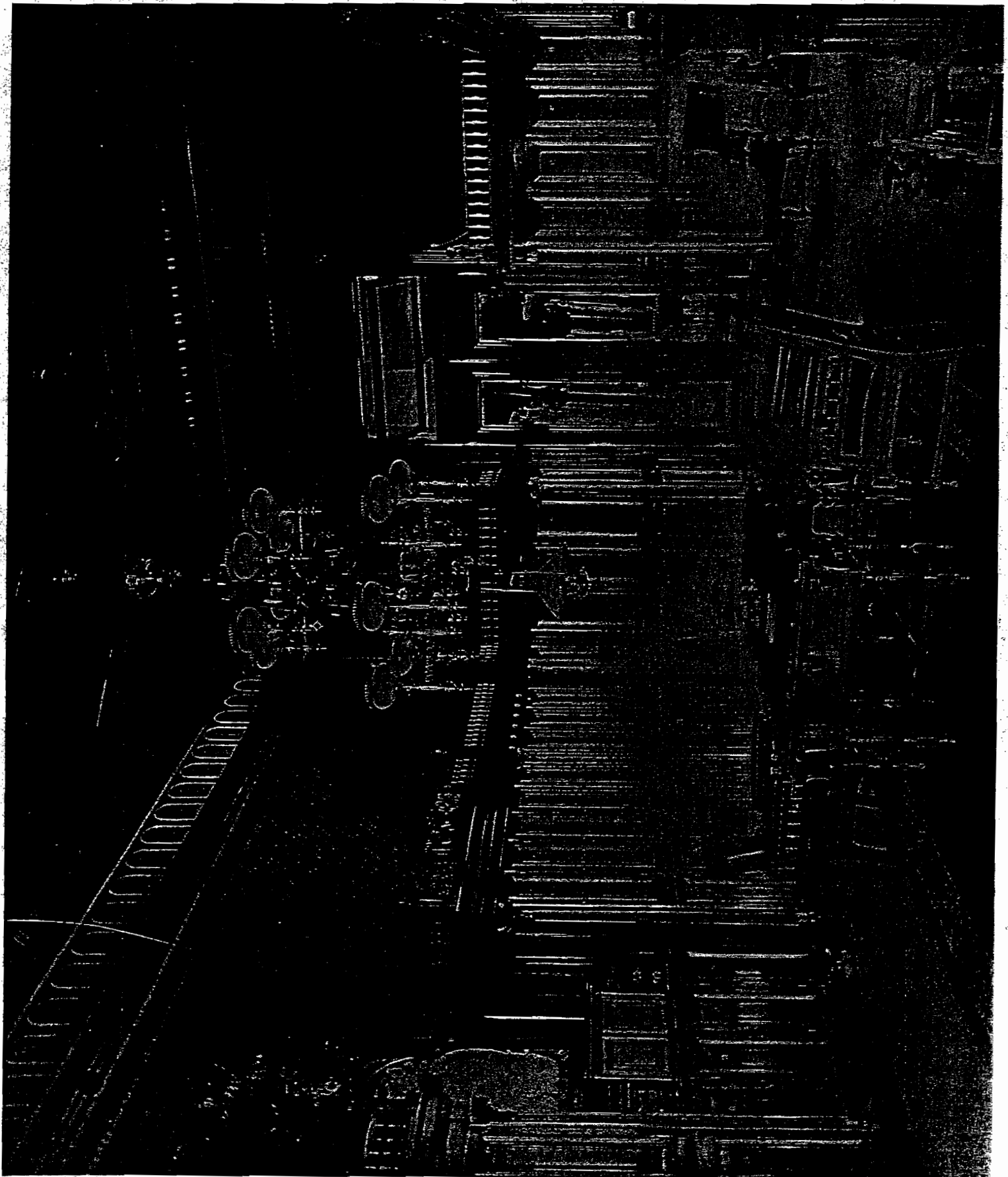
2 attached desks below west wall windows

wallpaper (post-1955)

parquet floor

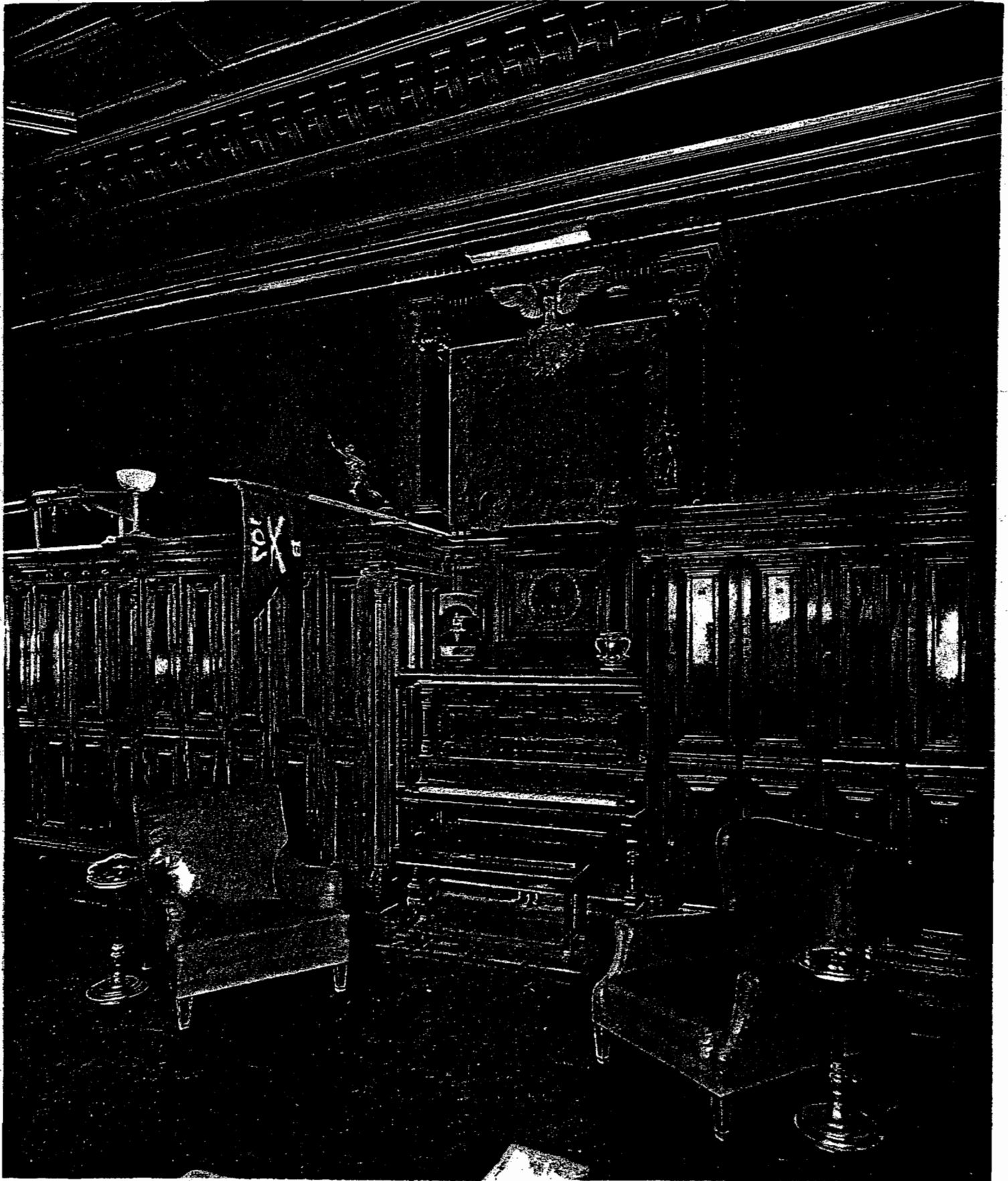
References

Clark; *The Decorator and Furnisher*; Pach Bros. photograph; NYT (Apr. 10, 1880); *Boston Press* (Nov. 1, 1880); *SRG* (1895-1933); Albert Waks photograph; LPC, *Puck Building Designation Report*



Company B Room

Photo: Pach Bros. (c. 1880), Collection of The New-York Historical Society



Company B Room

Photo: Albert L. Waks (c. 1955)